

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 6, 9 and 11-18 are currently pending in the application; with claim 1 being independent. Claims 1, 3, 6, 9 and 11-13 were pending prior to the Office Action. In the current amendment, claim 1 has been amended. New claims 14-18 have been added.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein. Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration thereof in light of the amendments and comments contained herein, and earnestly seeks timely allowance of the pending claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 6, 9 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner pointed to the limitation “at least one page” in line 10 of claim 1, and the limitation “at least one page” at line 6 of claim 1.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Applicant has amended claim 1 to recite “recording and erasing information in one or more pages in blocks of the plurality of blocks”.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection of claims 1, 3, 6, 9 and 11-13.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6,411,552 (“Chiba”).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite allocating a specific area having a frequently changing information to at least one page in one block of the plurality of blocks, wherein pages in said one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area.

Support for this amendment can be found at least at page 6 lines 20-32 in the specification, and in Fig. 2.

Chiba merely discloses a memory allocation system, which includes a block erasing type memory device including a plurality of blocks. The block erasing type memory device is capable of erasing stored data collectively in units of one block. The data processing means includes a formatting portion connected to the block erasing type memory device according to formatting information for substantially coinciding size and position of a cluster as a logical unit of a memory region of the block erasing type memory device (col. 2, lines 11-38; col. 5, 50-60).

Chiba fails to teach or suggest allocating a specific area having a frequently changing information to at least one page in one block of the plurality of blocks, wherein pages in said one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area; and disabling remaining pages in said one block when said allocating step allocates the frequently changing information to said at least one page in said one block, wherein said remaining pages include at least one page, wherein the frequently changing information is managing data recorded in the recording medium or root directory information, as recited in claim 1.

Chiba does not disclose that pages in a block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area.

In Figs. 16 and 17 Chiba does not illustrate that pages in a block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area. Furthermore, the identification flag employing the value “FFh” illustrated in Fig. 17 does not indicate an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area.

Also, claim 1 recites that pages in said one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area. Hence, in the method recited in claim 1, each page among multiple pages in a block contain an area for recording area management information. If

the identification flag “FFh” in Chiba were considered, *in arguendo*, to indicate an area for recording area management information (which Applicant does not admit), the flag “FFh” is only present at one head of cluster group 1 (Fig. 17, col. 19 lines 55-57). The flag “FFh” is not present in a plurality of pages in the block containing a FFh flag. Additionally, the Cluster Group 1 in Fig. 17 represents 2 blocks (as illustrated in Fig. 16), and it is not clear from Chiba that the crossed-out section located below Directory in Fig. 17 is present in the same block as the FAT and Directory portions. It is entirely possible that the crossed-out section located below Directory in Fig. 17 belongs to a block different from the block including some of the FAT and Directory portions. Hence, Fig. 17 of Chiba does not teach “allocating a specific area having a frequently changing information to at least one page in one block of the plurality of blocks, wherein multiple pages in said one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area; and disabling remaining pages in said one block when said allocating step allocates the frequently changing information to said at least one page in said one block, wherein said remaining pages include at least one page”, because Chiba does not teach that at least one page including the FAT/Directory in Fig. 17 contains an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area, and because Chiba does not teach that a block contains multiple FFh flags, or an FFh flag and additional pages which are disabled. The FFh flag is only written at a head of a cluster group in which the FAT and directory are written, but not necessarily in every block. Furthermore, at col. 19 lines 58-59 Chiba explicitly teaches that the cluster group in which the FAT and directory are not written is an empty block.

Claim 1, on the other hand, recites allocating a specific area having a frequently changing information to at least one page in one block of the plurality of blocks, wherein pages (note plural form) in said one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area.

Furthermore, even if the FAT and directory may be allocated separately (in different clusters) in Chiba, such allocation does not solve the problem that Chiba does not teach

"allocating a specific area having a frequently changing information to at least one page in one block of the plurality of blocks, wherein multiple pages in said one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area; and disabling remaining pages in said one block when said allocating step allocates the frequently changing information to said at least one page in said one block, wherein said remaining pages include at least one page."

For all of the above reasons, taken alone or in combination, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection of claim 1. Claims 11 and 13 depend from claim 1 and are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

The Examiner rejected claims 3, 6, 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba further in view of US 6,978,342 ("Estakhri").

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the Examiner has the burden of meeting the basic criterion that the prior art must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations.

Regarding this basic criterion, the Applicant submits that Chiba and Estakhri do not disclose or suggest that pages in one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area, as recited in claim 1.

On page 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner alleged (bottom of page 8) that Chiba teaches an area for management information at Figs. 16 and 17. Applicants submit that Chiba does not teach or suggest that multiple pages in one block each contain an area for recording area management information. If the Examiner is referring to flag FFh in Fig. 17 as indicating presence of an area for management information, Applicants point out that flag FFh is not present in multiple pages in one block.

The Examiner recognized that Chiba does not teach pages provided with an area for recording information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, or a disabled area, (top of page 9 in Office Action). The Examiner then alleged that Estakhri teaches that various flags can be applied to per page basis and pointed to Fig. 1 items 110, 112, 114 and 116 in Estakhri.

Applicants point out that such teaching is not found in Estakhri. Estakhri is only concerned with blocks. Estakhri is not concerned with pages. In fact, the word "page" is not found anywhere in Estakhri. Fig. 1 of Estakhri shows a memory storage 104 arranged into N blocks of data (col. 5 line 25). A collection of information flags is stored for each nonvolatile memory location 106. These flags include an old/new flag 110, a used/free flag 112, a defect flag 114, and a single/sector flag 116 (col. 5 lines 49-52). The flags 110, 112, 114 and 116 are not associated with pages, since Estakhri does not describe any pages in a block. Additionally, flags 110, 112, 114 and 116 do not indicate an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area.

Claim 1 recites that pages in one block each contain an area for recording area management information including information indicating an unused area, an allocated area, a disabled area, or an ordinary recording area. Estakhri does not teach or suggest this limitation.

For all of the above reasons, taken alone or in combination, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) rejection of claims 3, 6, 9 and 12.

CONCLUSION

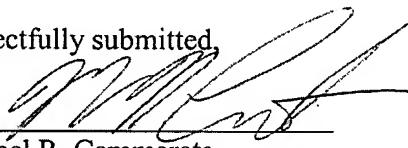
In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application appears to be in condition for allowance and the Examiner is, therefore, requested to reexamine the application and pass the claims to issue.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Corina E. Tanasa, Limited Recognition No. L0292 under 37 CFR §11.9(b), at telephone number (703) 208-4003, located in the Washington, DC area, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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